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would appear to the writer that a distinction can be drawn between the static agent on the one hand, and the moving agent on the other.

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#### A POSSIBLE FACTOR IN THE INCREASING INCIDENCE OF GOITER

IN my surveys of industrial hygiene I have noted that at some of the salt works in Ohio, where the material is obtained from deep wells (which in pioneer days were widely known springs, and the gathering points of men and animals), bromine, and a trace of iodine, are separated out of the purified product, sodium chloride, and bromine sold as a by-product. I suspect that in inland countries, Nature's chief source of iodine has been in connection with these salt springs, wells, and "licks," and that perhaps this change to a deep source of salt and this purification has resulted in the quite complete absence of iodine from our daily condiment when obtained from inland manufacturers, that is, in package or carton through the avenues of commerce.

It is well known that sea salt, some sea foods, and sea growths contain iodine. Also there is only a limited amount of goiter among dwellers along the seas. Furthermore, in former times a considerable part of the salt used has been sea salt, simply crystallized, and not necessarily pure sodium chloride separated from the other halogen salts.

At first this theory does not seem plausible in connection with the historical incidence of goiter, cretinism, and other manifestations of hypo-thyroidism, noted in the Alps and associated mountain regions, wherein are located some of the largest salt mines in the world. However, Molinari in his "Inorganic Chemistry," as translated by Dr. Ernest Fielmann (1912), takes occasion to explain that while these great salt beds were originally naturally deposited from sea waters, they have had the composition of the deposits very materially changed during the ages, through the varying solubilities of the halogen compounds (sodium iodide being particularly soluble and therefore among the first to be washed out through the influence of percolating wa-

ters). Hence perhaps inhabitants of these regions, getting their salt from these localities, have been bereft of the associated iodine component so essential to the human economy.

As is well known, Marine and Kimball published remarkable effects of the administration of a few grains of sodium iodide several times a year to school children as a prophylaxis in goiter.<sup>1</sup> After communication with two or three authorities I am convinced that this suggestion concerning goiter has not been heretofore considered. Also in an investigation of literature at hand, I have been unable to find that any consideration has been given to the influence of a condiment composed of whole sea salts upon goitrous conditions. Should any one be so informed, I shall be pleased to hear from him, inasmuch as I have determined to spend a little time this summer in investigating the subject from the industrial end.

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#### THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF COUNTRY PLANNING

FOLLOWING in the wake of city planning now comes country planning. As the face of the country differs from the face of the city, so country planning in some respects will differ from city planning. The social aspects of the planning idea as applied to country living conditions, are so important that a study of these aspects should rank as a sociological contribution of the first order.

Such a study is under way in the Division of Farm Life Studies, Office of Farm Management and Farm Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture. The first step in the study is finding out the location of a few of the best instances or examples of outdoor country art and country planning in the United States—especially instances arising from the initiative of farm or village populations. The next step is to obtain a description and history of each from the person who has been connected with, or has close personal

<sup>1</sup> *Jour. Amer. Med. Assoc.*, Vol. 71, No. 26, pp. 2155, Dec., 1918.